To the Editors:

I’m a faculty member at an accelerated RN program. One of the students gave me Patricia Benner’s article titled “Relational Ethics of Comfort, Touch, and Solace—Endangered Arts?” (2004;13:346-349). Yesterday, in nursing skills lab, I talked about the use of relaxation techniques to provide comfort to patients who were receiving adequate analgesic measures, but were anxious or agitated. We discussed the use of controlled breathing and muscle relaxation as comfort measures. The students then discussed other measures they have used to provide comfort. One student talked about using a hair wash kit. This hair wash kit has a shower cap that is warmed and then placed on the patient’s head and massaged; the hair is then air dried. The student explained that washing hair is common and acceptable in many cultures. We all talked about how washing the hair allows nurses to provide acceptable touching and that massaging the head can be relaxing. I find that my students have multiple experiences outside of nursing that seem to provide them with perspectives to support comfort and touch measures.

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LETTER TO THE EDITORS
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